GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2928
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2016
Toxic Waste
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the toxic waste left after the Bhopal gas tragedy is still lying at the Union Carbide factory;
(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
(c) whether the Government has formulated a new plan for safe disposal of the toxic waste;
(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon; and
(e) whether the Government proposes to formulate a uniform policy regarding nuclear waste management and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a)&(b) Approximately three hundred forty six (346) tonnes of hazardous waste is safely secured and kept in the factory premises of Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL), Bhopal. Waste is segregated into four categories which are Sevin residue and Naphthol residue (95 tonnes), Reactor residue (30 tonnes), Semi-processed pesticide (56 tonnes) and Excavated waste/Contaminated Soil (165 tonnes).

(c)&(d) In line with the approved plan of Government of India, Government of Madhya Pradesh is responsible for safe disposal of the above waste. Supreme Court is monitoring the disposal of the waste and remediation of the site. In pursuance of the orders of Supreme Court in April, 2014 the Ministry authorized Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to incinerate 10 tonnes of UCIL waste at Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facility during August, 2015. The Ministry has further sought directions from the Supreme Court on the future roadmap for disposal of the remaining waste and remediation of the contaminated site.

(e) A comprehensive radioactive waste management is established taking into account the operational requirements under the supervision of an independent regulatory agency. The radioactive solid wastes generated during operation and maintenance of nuclear power plants are segregated and volume reduced prior to its disposal. Disposal of waste is carried out in specially constructed structures such as stone lined trenches, reinforced concrete trenches and tile holes. These disposal systems are designed on multi-barrier principle for ensuring effective containment of radioactivity. The areas where the disposal structures are located are kept under constant surveillance with the help of bore-wells laid out in a planned manner. This policy is on par with international practices followed as per the guidelines of International Atomic Energy Agency.

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